

Minutes

South La Crosse Transportation Study

Local Business Meeting

WisDOT Project ID 1644-08-00

Wednesday, March 30, 2005

8 a.m.

All Star Banquets

Minutes by: Chuck Wade

Present: WisDOT – Beth Price, Dale Oestreich
LAPC – Tom Faella
Town of Shelby – Jeff Brudos
SEH Inc. – Darren Fortney, Jim Hanson, Chuck Wade
Local business representatives – Approximately 20 local business representatives attended the meeting.

Displays: Intersection alternatives, mainline alternatives, mainline intersection options, access management strategies

Materials distributed: Project contacts sheet, comment form, mainline matrix, intersection matrix

Action items:

- A business owner would like to know how much land the alternatives acquire from his property. He would like to have electronic copies of the mainline alternatives emailed to him.
- A business representative would like electronic copies of the mainline alternatives emailed to him.

1. Welcome and study overview

Darren Fortney and Jim Hanson presented project background information including the purpose and need, limits, timeline, traffic congestion, geometric deficiencies and crash/safety.

2. Strategies and recommendations

Mainline strategies included the two-way-left-turn-lane alternative, the four-lane alternative, and the hybrid alternative. The mainline alternatives also included potential intersection options. The intersection alternatives for US 14/61/WIS 35 included a system approach of six alternatives that also included 33rd Street, Old Town Hall Road, Riverview Drive and Sunnyside Drive.

3. Meeting wrap up

Upcoming study activities include reviewing and analyzing public comments, meeting with local officials in April, refining alternatives and determining cost estimates, formal local official meetings, public information meetings and writing the study report.

4. Comments

Comments from the meeting included:

- A right turn lane should be recommended for southbound Mormon Coulee Road to westbound 33rd Street.
- A few businesses expressed their desire for the alternatives to maintain their existing access and not restrict access via installation of a median.
- A business located on Losey Blvd. would like to see a bus stop on the south side of the road. The current bus stop located across the street from them is not served by sidewalks. It is difficult for blind and disabled individuals to safely access the business from the current bus stop. Sidewalks are currently present on the south side of Losey Blvd.
- A question was raised as to the incorporation of bikes and pedestrians into the alternatives. Bike and pedestrian accommodations are included in all of the alternatives.
- A business representative shared his concerns over the implementation of a median for businesses along South Avenue/Mormon Coulee Road. He was concerned with the effect on land values and future investment in property. He felt that businesses should be coordinated with well in advance of the public.
- A business was concerned of the effect a median would have on them. He explained that the current signal makes it difficult to make left-turns out of his business. He was wondering if a short-term solution could be implemented. A potential change would need to be requested to the City of La Crosse and would likely not be implemented prior to six months.
- A business owner would like to know exactly how much land each of the alternatives would take from his property.
- A business near 33rd Street was concerned about the medians shown on the intersection alternatives between US 14/61/WIS 35 and 33rd Street.

Letters:

- A business owner mailed a letter with six signatures. The letter reads as follows:
 - We were at your planning meeting yesterday, and we favor a stop and go light at this intersection. We vividly oppose the 'right in and right out'. We are unfamiliar with the three land turnarounds, also an option. However, we feel that this solution would be much better than the 'right in and right out'.

Comments from returned comment forms include:

- Question 1 – Please tell us your thoughts about the draft mainline alternatives: (4-lane Variable Width Median, 5-lane Two-Way-Left-Turn-Lane, Hybrid, No-build Alternative).
 - 4-lane variable width median is unacceptable. We went through this when the Wal-Mart stop light went in, and after that battle, we were allowed to keep our access. Any of the others provide some access.

- Question 2 – Please tell us your thoughts about the draft intersection alternatives for US 14/61/WIS 35: (refer to the US 14/61/WIS 35 Intersection Alternatives Handout).
- Question 3 – Please tell us your thoughts about the potential access management strategies for South Avenue/Mormon Coulee Road:
 - There needs to be some middle ground between access and traffic flow. People who own businesses should not live the next 10 to 20 years in fear of losing access and so losing their business.
- Please provide any additional comments in the space provided below:
 - I want to know the plan the DOT and city have for our properties. I want to be informed of decisions and directions. I will be very much against any plan that restricts our access to right-in/right-out or frontage road access.